

Story 1372 (1989 Tape 4)

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The Eunuch's Golden Watch

Once during the Ottoman period a ^{Negro} black eunuch from the padişah's harem went to the cluster of small shops near Beyazıt Mosque in İstanbul. This eunuch was a totally uneducated man. Among those shops was a jewelry store, and the eunuch went there and spent all of his money on a golden watch.

The eunuch was very proud of his ownership of such an expensive watch, even though he was unable to tell time. Wishing to have everyone know that he had such a fine watch, he pulled it out of his pocket every two or three minutes and stared at it, as if he could tell time. One day shortly after that, he was walking past those same shops near Beyazıt Mosque. Almost everyone he met he asked, "What time is it?"

When the person would answer, "Two o'clock," or "Three o'clock," the eunuch would pull his own golden watch from his pocket.

After the eunuch had examined his watch for a second,

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he would say, "You are right! That's exactly what my watch says too!"

A trickster who watched the eunuch doing this for some time decided to make fun of the poor man. Putting himself in the eunuch's path, he was asked the usual question by that ignorant fellow: "What time is it?"

Looking at his watch, the trickster said, "It is five minutes past thirty."

Looking proudly at his own watch, the black eunuch said, "Your watch is correct. Mine also says five minutes past thirty!"